



**U.S. ARMY CIVIL AFFAIRS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL
OPERATIONS COMMAND (AIRBORNE)**
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

*U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
FORT BRAGG, NC 28310 / (910) 432-6005 / <http://www.soc.mil>*

Maj. Gregory John Fester
Died on Aug. 30, 2005
Operation Iraqi Freedom

Maj. Gregory J. Fester died Aug. 30, 2005, from injuries sustained when an Improvised Explosive Device detonated near his dismounted patrol in Iraq by known enemies of the United States of America.

He was born March 12, 1964, in Ohio, and graduated from Westerville North High School, Westerville, Ohio, in 1982.

Fester entered the Army as an administrative specialist in the Ohio National Guard on March 29, 1984.

Fester received his Army ROTC commission in 1987, graduating from Ohio State University. As a second lieutenant, Fester served on active duty with the 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment. He was promoted to first lieutenant in May 1989, when he served with 3rd Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment.



While serving in Wertheim, Germany in 1990, Fester served in Battery Charlie, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery (Multiple Launch Rocket System). His unit deployed to parts of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq. During the initial ground phase of Desert Storm, Fester assumed command when his commander became injured from contact with a landmine and was unable to return to duty.

In August 1991, he was reunited with his family and preceded to Fort Sill, Okla., where he attended the Officer Advanced Course. There he was promoted to Captain.

After completion of the Officer Advanced Course, Fester was stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C., where he took command of Battery Charlie, 3rd Battalion, 27th Field Artillery. Following his completed service at Fort Bragg, Fester was assigned to New Cumberland Army Depot outside of Harrisburg, Pa. His term of service in Pennsylvania was short, as Fester departed active duty to accept a sales representative position with Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in Buffalo, N.Y.

In 1996, Fester began both his civilian career with Pfizer and his military career as a tactical intelligence officer with the N.Y. Air National Guard's Engineer Brigade, 42nd Infantry Division. However, in December of 1999, Fester joined the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), where he was assigned to the 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion, Tonawanda, N.Y.

He completed the Civil Affairs Officer Advanced Course in 2001, and was promoted to major, shortly thereafter. Additionally, he accepted a promotion with Pfizer in 2001 and moved his family to Grand Rapids, Mich., in 2002, entering into the IRR to pursue achievements in his civilian career.

Fester was ordered back to active duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism in March 2005. He was stationed near Iskandariyah, Iraq, as a Civil Affairs officer supporting the 322nd Civil Affairs Brigade.

Fester's military education includes Administrative Specialist Course, Basic Airborne Course, ROTC, Field Artillery Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, Multiple Launch Rocket System Cadre Course, Combined Arms Service Staff School and the Civil Affairs Advance Course.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with three bronze service stars, the Kuwaiti Liberation Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Valorous Unit Award and the Parachutist Badge. Fester was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

Fester is survived by his wife, Julie Fester, children Jennifer, Megan and Peyton Fester of Grand Rapids, Mich. His father and stepmother, William G. Fester and Theda of Johns Island, S.C., and his mother Ginger also survive him.

-By Sword, Deed and Word-